

## BRITISH ODONATA IN 1911.

By W. J. LUCAS, B.A., F.E.S.

(Concluded from p. 144.)

ON August 10th Col. J. W. Yerbury sent me a few dragonflies from the North of Scotland. A male *C. annulatus*, Nethy Bridge, August 6th; two males, *Aeschna juncea*, Nethy Bridge, August 6th and 7th; one male *L. quadrimaculata*, Nethy Bridge, August 7th; one male *Sympetrum scoticum*, Nethy Bridge, August 7th; one male *S. scoticum*, Spey Bridge, August 8th; and three females, *Lestes sponsa*, Aviemore, August 10th. For experiment, the three *L. sponsa* were despatched while still alive in small tubes. Unfortunately they had to be readdressed to me from Kingston to the New Forest. Two arrived dead, but the third was quite alive, notwithstanding the length of time on the journey.

On his return south the same entomologist gave me a most interesting little collection of dragonflies he had taken during his summer visit to the North of Scotland. Amongst them was a pair of insects belonging to the genus *Sympetrum*, which are either new or else constitute a very distinct race of *S. striolatum*. In 1900 (*vide* Entom. vol. xxxiii. p. 139) I called attention to and figured details of a dragonfly, one of two females brought by Mr. H. S. Fremlin from Stornoway in 1899. There was some doubt about their identity, and Mr. McLachlan seemed to think the specimens might be hybrids between *S. striolatum* and *S. scoticum*. Though a very unsatisfactory conclusion, it was left at this. Now Col. Yerbury has captured a pair at Lochinver (June 24th and July 7th, 1911), in Ross, the very counterpart of the two females from Stornoway. These I describe as *Sympetrum nigrescens*:—

*Description*.—Vertex ochreous; anterior to it a rather broad black band, extending to some extent downwards along the side of the eyes as in *S. vulgatum*. Rest of face ochreous, rhinarium and neighbourhood being rather lighter; hairs black. On the mesonotum two distinct narrow longitudinal yellowish streaks. Ground colour of sides of thorax nearly black, with two large bright yellow oblong spots; between these four small ones, and below them, three others, all bright yellow; under surface of thorax very dark, with bright yellowish markings. The thorax recalls very strongly that of *S. scoticum*. Wing-nervures black; pterostigma as in *S. striolatum*. Fore legs black, with femur somewhat ochreous below; mid and hind legs black; all legs with a fine ochreous line along the tibia. Abdomen blackish below; ridges outlined in black; two black dorsal dots on several of the segments. In the female there are, in addition, strong black lateral lines on the segments of the abdomen. Genitalia much as in *S. striolatum*. In the male the internal hamular branch perhaps a little more blunt and the external one a little sharper

and more distinct. The margin of the vulvar scale nearly straight, barely hollowed. Size between that of normal *S. striolatum* and *S. scoticum*. General appearance so distinct from normal *S. striolatum* that one was relaxed, set, and put in the cabinet with *S. scoticum* before the difference was noticed in size and pterostigma.

Other specimens were:—*S. scoticum*, a female, Nethy Bridge, August 11th. *L. quadrimaculata*, a male, Inchnadamph, Loch Assynt, June 2nd; a female, Inchnadamph, Loch Assynt, no date; a male, Loch Assynt, June 8th. *C. annulatus*, a female, Loch Assynt, June 6th. *Æschna cærulea*, a male, Loch Assynt, June 6th; a female, Loch Assynt, June 3rd—a new locality for this scarce and interesting species. *Æ. juncea*, a male, Nethy Bridge, September 4th. *L. sponsa*, a male, Lochinver, July 9th. *P. nymphula*, two females, Inchnadamph, June 1st; two males, Loch Assynt, June 10th and 12th; a male, Lochinver, June 23rd; a male and a female, *in cop.*, Lochinver, July 9th; a female, Nethy Bridge, July 28th. *I. elegans*, a male, and a nice female var. *rufescens*, June 20th; a male, July 1st; a male, July 9th; and a male, July 16th—all at Lochinver. *E. cyathigerum*, a male, June 20th; three males, June 21st; a male and a female, *in cop.*, June 23rd; a female, June 24th. In addition, there were the following nymphs or skins:—One *C. annulatus*, apparently immature, picked up on the shore of Loch Assynt, June 13th; one *C. annulatus*, Lochinver, June 28th or 29th, found alongside a freshly emerged male imago; one *C. annulatus*, Lochinver, June 27th, on trunk of alder, banks of Inver; one *E. cyathigerum*, Lochinver, July 11th, apparently the nymph-skin from which emerged a very teneral female sent with it.

Writing from Nethy Bridge, August 22nd, Mr. J. J. F. X. King said of *Agrion hastulatum* that, though he met with the males in fair numbers, he found the females scarce, at their habitat at Aviemore. The species is on the wing only for a short time, hence the difficulty in obtaining specimens.

In addition to the examples of *S. fonscolombii* previously mentioned, Lieut.-Col. Nurse showed me other dragonflies taken in the East of England in 1911. *Brachytron pratense*, two males, Chippenham, Cambridgeshire, May 21st and June 16th. *Æschna cyanea*, a male, Stowmarket, Suffolk, August 2nd. *P. nymphula*, five males, Chippenham, May 17th. *I. elegans*, a female, Wicken Fen, Cambridge, May 28th; and a female, Chippenham, June 16th. *Agrion puella*, two females, Ampton, West Suffolk, May 18th and August 13th.

Mr. G. O. Sloper sent me from Oughterard, co. Galway, Ireland, a male and a female of *Æ. juncea*, taken on September 11th, 1911.

Writing on November 22nd, Mr. N. P. Fenwick, Jun., gave a few notes on his doings amongst the Odonata during the year. He said:—"This year I first saw *Æ. grandis* on July 8th, when

I took two males on the River Mole. *Platynemis pennipes* has been very scarce there this year; but one or two *Erythromma naidas* were about at the beginning of July. On July 24th I saw a large *Æschna*, which I am pretty sure was *grandis*, hawking up and down amongst the motor-buses in Cornhill. On the previous day I saw on the Mole an *Æ. grandis* pounce on a *Pieris rapæ* which happened to fly near. It quickly bit off the wings of the butterfly and departed with the body in its mouth. During the latter half of August and September I was shooting in Achill Island, co. Mayo, and was surprised to find that the Odonata there were chiefly conspicuous by their absence. However, one or two *S. striolatum* were to be seen, and also an occasional *I. elegans*. The weather was not good, and this may account for their scarcity to a certain extent."

Though the fine weather continued into the autumn, late records for dragonflies were disappointing. On October 1st, near Bedford, I saw one example, which was no doubt *S. striolatum*, while at the Black Pond, Surrey, on Oct. 28th, I watched a few which, with still less doubt, belonged to that species. These were the last I saw. Mr. G. T. Lyle, however, found that species common in the New Forest on November 5th. Miss A. Sharp tells me that on November 1st she saw a big one in the New Forest, but could not name it. Assuming it to have been an *Æschna*, a certain record of it would have been very interesting.

Kingston-on-Thames: March, 1912.

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## NOTES ON THE DRAGONFLY SEASON OF 1911.

BY F. W. AND H. CAMPION.

NOTWITHSTANDING the long and brilliant summer of 1911, dragonflies did not seem to be particularly abundant on the few occasions when we had opportunities for observing them. However, twenty-four species were met with during the season by ourselves or by our fellow collector, Mr. H. J. Watts, and a certain number of the captures made seem to be worthy of mention.

On August 14th Mr. Watts showed us a male of *Sympetrum flavesculum* which he had taken the day before at Wisley, Surrey. We visited the same pond ourselves on August 26th, and took two more males, all the specimens which were seen. Again at Wisley, on August 20th, Mr. Watts obtained a female of *S. danaë*, Sulz. (= *S. scoticum*, Don.) exhibiting a very interesting malformation. The tips of both fore wings presented the appearance of a piece of soft paper which had been twisted into a screw between the thumb and forefinger, and the abnormal condition was no doubt due to incomplete inflation of the wings, through